

No. 175 August 1990

# Hillandale

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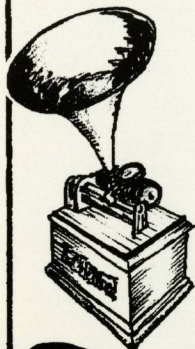
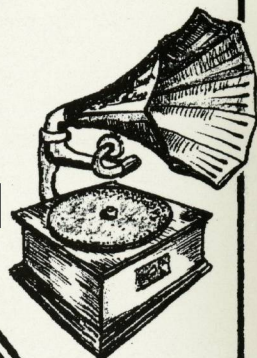
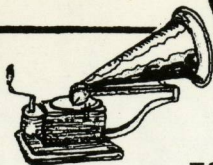
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# The HILLANDALE News

The Official Journal of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

Founded in 1919

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*Hertfordshire, SG8 7BB, England*

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# Passing Notes

**This issue of Hillandale News is the first under the editorship of Charles Levin.**

Our journal has won a worldwide reputation for much of its 30 years and in its more recent composition under Ted Cunningham has attracted an increasing readership, while the quality and number of its articles have risen remarkably.

To sit in the Editor's chair of a society such as our own, in fact to labour voluntarily in any capacity for an enthusiasts' club absorbs many hours when one might or should be doing something else – mowing the lawn, painting the kitchen, walking the wife or even just relaxing – and the new editor has taken his place in front of the VDU fully knowing that this enlivened journal will bring him inescapable letters approving, reproving, suggesting, and all needing an answer. At the same time there is nothing closer to a new editor's heart than an influx of articles, illustrated if at all possible, and letters he can publish – leaving the replies to the readers.

Tribute has been paid to Ted Cunningham's work by our Chairman in the June issue, and to add a personal note from nearer Grove Park, the present quality of Hillandale News has been achieved by a kind of 'hustle and push' of the old-fashioned sort. Ted Cunningham has worked up all the contracts with advertisers, with several new contributors, with printers, and when needed taken to the motorways, all toward giving us an improved and punctual Hillandale of a quality we must maintain.

Although Charles Levin is one of our younger members he has already helped us in secretarial matters and is well-known for his presentations at London meetings on a variety of topics. His record collecting activities, as well as his connections with the current record industry, both at home and at work will also be well known to many members. He carries the good wishes of us all in his new task.

*George Frow*

**After all that was said by my predecessor as Editor and by the Chairman in the last issue,** not to mention the George Frow's remarks in the previous column, there seems little else for me to say – I thank all those who have expressed good wishes upon my taking up the editorship and hope that I fulfill their expectations, and that all our readers enjoy the magazine as much as I hope I shall enjoy editing it! A brief word on the new production methods – I hope that the gradual process of ironing out the last few teething troubles in our new technology will not cause too many problems; the process will be one of gradual evolution, as regards style, content and so forth – and I welcome suggestions from members on any ideas that may strike them.

A brief word also on deadlines – *please* note that any announcements, articles, adverts or correspondence must be with me ***not later than six weeks before the first day of the month of publication.*** Hence the deadline for the October issue will be **15th August.**

Without wishing to harp upon it, I must turn for a moment to a subject Ted Cunningham mentioned often – contributions to the magazine. Clearly, without these there will be no magazine to publish so please let *nothing* stand in your way should there be any subject upon which you feel able to write, at whatever length! Every member is an audiophile in some sense of the word – otherwise he would not join the Society – and most members have at least one subject especially close to their heart, if not several. If every members wrote a few pages on just one favourite topic, we should have enough material to reach the year 2025, at a rough guess! I look forward to hearing from you out there...

In particular, it would be nice to feature international material. The membership includes a high proportion of overseas residents ably qualified to write on their domestic record industry – not to mention those in England equally well versed in foreign fields, an area of enormous interest to us all.

*Charles Levin*



# NIPPER'S UNCLE

William Barraud and his Disc Records

## Part Two

*By Frank Andrews*

On October 2nd 1912 the Dacapo Record Co., Ltd. was incorporated with a nominal capital of £1,000 in £1 shares. The registered office was at 10 Copthall Avenue, London, E.C. but by November the new company was occupying premises at 5, City Road, E.C. where it had an established recording studio.

All was put under the management of E.F.G. Hale (known in the trade as "Alphabet" Hale). He went to the Dacapo business from the Homophone business which was operating in Britain through its own agency company. Hale had been with Homophone Records for three years and for the eight years previous to that had been with the Columbia Phonograph Coy., Gen'l in London.

The Dacapo Record Co., Ltd. began advertising its discs in the trade journals in November 1912.

### W.A. BARRAUD, LTD AND INVICTA RECORDS

With the Dacapo Records then available from the new source in November 1912, W.A. Barraud, Ltd. announced itself as makers and stockists of the INVICTA RECORD.



The Invicta Record was a new label in

Germany belonging to the Berolina Schallplatten G.m.b.H. of Berlin which, having its own "BEROLINA RECORD" for its own domestic market had recently launched its Invicta label as a "Special Record" for other languages. The Berolina Company itself had recently been founded by Paul Kuchler of Berlin and Albert Vogt of Weissensee, Berlin on October 31st 1911. The partners had brought into their business the sole selling rights of the German Empire for the Syrena Records of the Syrena a Record Gesellschaft in Warsaw, then a part of the Russian Empire. (Globo, Globophon and Festival Records are often found with a "KV" monogram associated with the matrix numbers and it is possible that Kuchler and Vogt were responsible for those earlier makes, some of which were sold in Britain). The November announce-

ment of the German Empire for the Syrena Records of the Syrena a Record Gesellschaft in Warsaw, then a part of the Russian Empire. (Globo, Globophon and Festival Records are often found with a "KV" monogram associated with the matrix numbers and it is possible that Kuchler and Vogt were responsible for those earlier makes, some of which were sold in Britain). The November announce-



ment of records from W.A. Barraud, Ltd. stated that there were already 400 titles available but that the initial catalogue series, which began at No.1, showed the highest number at 179 in those records which were selected from the catalogue as examples for what were on offer, thus making for only 358 titles!

From the outset, there were already a substantial number of British recordings in the Invicta Record catalogue and all of them would have to have been repressings of other matrices until the New Inn Yard studios were able to despatch new recorded waxes to Berlin. It is a feature of many of the lownumbered Invicta Records that they do bear a number of "matrix" numbers. As an example, Invicta Record No.58 with "Phil Gordon" singing "If I had the world to give you", was obviously first recorded in Barraud's Clifton Street studio for Dacapo Records, and given the matrix number 11522. This side then became available to the German Bel Canto Record G.m.b.H. of Berlin, the Bel Canto label having been established in Berlin as early as August 1909 and which claimed to offer nothing but new recordings. In February 1911, John G. Murdoch & Co., Ltd. became the agents for Bel Canto Records exported from Germany, some with a British repertoire and some which were clearly from Dacapo's recordings, but given a 5,000 series of matrix numbers. Murdoch's did have their own recording studio in Farringdon Street, E.C. where recording appear to have taken place for the Bel Canto label. Albert W. Ketelbey, the conductor/composer, had been Murdoch's musical director their for the production of their Indestructible Phonograph Records which were processed in Albany, New York and then sent back to Murdoch's who, at first, had advertised them as "Columbia Indestructible Cylinders." 5246 is the earliest matrix on no.58.

The next matrix number on this Invicta 58 side is 364466 and this is, as far as I am able to substantiate, a "stock control matrix number"

applied by the Turmalin Werke of Berlin which issued the Turmalin Phon Records and which, it was reported in that same November when the Invictas were put on sale by Barraud, had taken over the matrices and original recordings of the Bel Canto G.m.b.H. of Berlin, that company's assets having passed into the hands of The Pachaly Company, a banking house established in Breslau. A third matrix number on Invicta 58-1938, was applied in a 1900 series and in that case it turns out to be W.A. Barraud Ltd.'s own stock control matrix number. Other matrix numbers found on some other Invicta Records probably came from Berolina Schallplatten's own matrices, which were also used on other Invicta records, not under Barraud's agency, which were exported to other countries. Occasionally, a Beka Grand Record matrix number can also be found on some lownumbered Invicta Records!

The only supposition I can offer as to how a Beka recording might appear on an Invicta pressing is that, when Beka Records stopped supplying masters for use by the English Record Co., Ltd. in mid-1911, which were used to produce the John Bull Record, the matrices may have remained in the factory where the John Bull Records were pressed, which could have been one of the mass pressing factories in Germany which undertook work for a number of companies. Berolina Schallplatten could have been a customer of one of those mass pressing concerns and have acquired matrices which were no longer in use by Beka, for some of the Invicta early titles go back to 1908, and could only have come from Beka who had begun business in 1904. "Phil Gordon" on Invicta 58 was Thomas Jackson from Dacapo Record 192/mtx. 11522.

### **FRANCIS JAMES BARRAUD PAINTS ANOTHER PICTURE**

The Band of Irish Guards, under its first conductor, Mr. Charles Hassell, had recorded for Dacapo Records whilst under the agency of Barraud, but with the Invicta Agency, the band became exclusive to W.A. Barraud, Ltd. and in December 1912 it was reported that Willie's brother Francis James had painted a lifesize por-



trait of Charles Hassell conducting the regimental band and it is understood that that portrait formed the content of dealers' show-cards and a poster advertising the Irish Guards Band's recordings.

There were other artists who had been on Dacapo Records but became exclusive to Invicta Records. They were W. Sizer, the well-known North of England cornettist, Mary Williams, contralto, who also recorded with her sister Ethel, and Pamby Dick, the Scottish accordion player, although he had been with Homophone Records, not Dacapo. The Two Rags were also said to be exclusive, one of whom was almost certainly Jack Charman, but he and his partners made other records under other pseudonyms and it was only the name of "Two Rags" which was exclusive to Invicta.

By the December 1912 supplement the series had reached 214 so the 400 titles claimed earlier were now indisputably a fact.

A feature of the discs, which were pressed in Germany, was a dating code pressed into the masters which indicated either the date at which that master had been grown from the "mother" master or the date it was passed for pressing. Essentially this comprised either the letter 'M' for 1912, or the letter 'N' for 1913, followed by a number between 1 and 31 to give the day's date, which was followed by a letter to indicate the month, starting with 'Z' for January and working backwards through the months.

The Invicta Record label, as sold in Britain, was printed with a half Union Jack in the upper part of the label, which was red, white and blue with black printing.

During September 1912, when W.A. Barraud, Ltd.'s Dacapo Record agency was being terminated, Philip Waldman, co-partner of A.J. Barton in the Empire Record enterprise, forwarded an application to have "Invicta Record" registered as a Trade Mark. His company address was then 249, Old St., E.C. It is not known whether A.J. Barton was still a partner in Waldman's enterprise or whether he had left him when he joined Willie Barraud as his junior partner in January 1912. As subsequent

events would seem to indicate, Waldman was still associated with Barraud and Barton at that time, although he later switched his allegiance to the Kalliope Musikwerke A.G. of Germany.

After eight months of trading with the Invicta Records, the Barraud business became aware that others were selling records under the Invicta name, which induced the company to advertise the following in "The Phono Trader", June 1913 :-

"It having come to our attention that records bearing our label are being offered for sale without our authority we hereby give notice to those it may concern that we have instructed our solicitor to take proceedings against anyone infringing our rights in the use of the Invicta Trade Mark registered under the Trade Marks Act 1905."

Such a notice was a grave blunder on W.A. Barraud, Ltd.'s part, since Waldman's application, no. 345605, had not been registered and neither had Willie nor his company made a separate application yet, let alone had one granted.

In that same June, W.A. Barraud, Ltd. resolved voluntarily to wind up its affairs. Mrs. Blanche Barraud, on the strength of her holding a debenture for a £1,000, which had been created in November 1912, appointed her solicitor, Mr. O'Neill, as the company's receiver. Payments and receipts balanced out at £2,124, 10s 7d when the receiver concluded his task on October 13th, 1913.

In the meantime, proceedings had begun against W.A. Barraud, Ltd. by Berolina Schallplatte G.m.b.H. of Germany. Waldman, who was said to have made a second application for the Invicta trade mark (although there is no evidence of this in the Trade Marks Journal) had begun selling Kalliope discs as "Our Flag" records, pressed from Kalliope Musikwerke masters, originally recordings made for Blum & Co., Ltd. by Kalliope, for its Victory and Diploma records, but which company had broken with Kalliope just as W.A. Barraud, Ltd. was in the process of breaking with Berolina Schallplatten.

No documentary evidence has been dis-



# A FEW DACAPO SUCCESSES.

We all go the same way home  
Do you remember the last  
Meet me in Kellyland (waltz)  
I don't care what becomes of  
me  
Yesterday you called me  
sweetheart  
They're all single by the  
seaside  
Kitty Dear  
The Garden of Dreams  
The Shadows  
When the Summer days are  
o'er Anna Gray

## Some Orchestra Hits.

In the Shadows  
Popular Memories  
Popular Hits  
A Bunch of Roses  
In Cooland  
Post Horn Gallop  
&c., &c.

**DACAPOS  
STAND  
SUPREME  
FOR TONE.**

**DACAPOS SHOW  
NEARLY 50 per cent.  
PROFIT TO THE  
AGENT.**

**QUICKEST  
SELLERS.**

**If your Factor does not stock them write to us and we will  
give you the name of one who does.**

**W. A. BARRAUD & CO.,**  
1, New Inn Yard, Great Eastern Street, E.C.  
TELEPHONE: 13282 CENTRAL.

2/6



Henry the Eighth,  
Meet me to-night in Dream-  
land  
Any old Iron.  
Baby's box of toys  
Let's have a basin of Soup  
Take your girlie on a steamer  
You can do a lot of things at  
the seaside.  
Introduce me to the Lady.  
Billy Whitlock at the Party  
&c. &c.

Banjo Solos by  
Mr. JOHN PIDOUX  
Fairy Bells by  
Mr. BILLY WHITLOCK  
Xylophone Solos by  
Mr. ALBERT MULLER  
Whistling Duets with Orch.  
Whistling Solos by  
Mr. GUIDO GIALDINI  
Cornet Solos by  
Mr. FELIX SILBERS  
Descriptives by  
Mr. JACK CHARMAN & Co  
SACRED numbers with  
Organ Accom.  
&c. &c.

**DACAPOS ARE THE  
TOP RECORD FOR  
THIS SEASON.  
Mr. AGENT, SEE  
THAT YOU  
INTRODUCE THEM  
IN YOUR DISTRICT.**

**LARGEST  
PROFITS.**

*The advertisement shows Barraud's move to the new address of 1, New Inn Yard.*



covered to support the claim that W.A. Barraud, Ltd., were granted the exclusive agency for the Invicta Records in Great Britain, nor for that matter just for London. Whatever the arrangements entered into they had practically broken down by May/June 1913 and, by putting his company into voluntary liquidation in June, Willie Barraud had paved the way for founding a new company which he called The Invicta Record Co., Ltd. This was incorporated on July 4th, 1913, with a nominal capital of £4,000; the only substantial shareholder was Mrs Blanche Barraud who held 500 £1 shares. William Barraud and Albert J. Barton were the directors, described as dealers in gramophones and records. The first registered office was at Bank Chambers in the Kingsland High Road, London, N.E., but in October 1913 - at the beginning of the 1913-1914 season the offices were moved to No.1, New Inn Yard.

The action brought against W.A. Barraud, Ltd., by Berolina Schallplatten was heard in the Old Street, London, E.C. Police Court in November 1913. A Dr. Lunge argued, on behalf of the German company, that the defendants were quite aware that no application for the registration for Invicta Record as a Trade Mark had been granted and the effect of W.A. Barraud, Ltd. advertising that there was such a registration had been to deter others from purchasing his client's goods bearing that label and thereby gained W.A. Barraud, Ltd. an unfair advantage over others. That company had since gone into liquidation, Dr. Lunge claimed, and none of its creditors had been paid up. He affirmed that it was quite certain that W.A. Barraud, Ltd. had no rights in a Trade Mark. Barraud's solicitor, who was not engaged until after the warning notice had been published, claimed that W.A. Barraud, Ltd. had been appointed the sole London agent for the Invicta Record of the German company, and that there had been an agreement for the sale of the trade mark, with both parties being under the impression that it had been registered and with the agreement confirming that the trade mark was the property of the London company. Who was supposed to have made that application was not mentioned. Waldman's applica-

tion had been on behalf of his own Empire Record Company, not on behalf of Barraud, which is an unsolved mystery.

Barraud's solicitor stated that as soon as it had been discovered that the Invicta Record application had not been registered, W.A. Barraud, Ltd. had taken steps to see that it would be but it was opposed. Those who opposed the registration were not mentioned, but as the Victor Talking Machine Company of America had its Victor Record label registered in Britain it was most likely that company which opposed the Invicta registration as, phonetically the two labels could be confused when spoken about. The Barraud company was fined £2 and had to pay another £1 in costs.

### THE INVICTA RECORD CO. LTD

Having lost the supplies of disc records from Germany, Barraud's new concern, the Invicta Record Co., Ltd. announced that in future, all Invicta records were to be British made with fifty new titles hope fully to be ready by the end of September to start the new season. Still exploiting the British market however, the Berolina Schallplatten appointed John Abrahams & Co. of 54, Redcross St., E.C. as its new British outlet and this meant there were then two different makes of Invicta Record on the market, and both continuing the catalogue numbers which had entered into the low 300s!

The Invicta Record Co.'s discs were to sell at 1s.6d. for its 10" size and 2s.6d. for its 12" size.

John Abrahams Invicta Records were priced at only 1 shilling, thus participating in the prices war which opened the 1913-1914 season when many makes of disc were put on sale at 1 shilling or 1s.1d. each. John Abrahams & Co. gleefully advertised the fact that another firm had been fined 40 shillings, with costs, for falsely advertising that it was the proprietor of a registered Trade Mark in Invicta Records when there was none. Some of the "The Bob Records" were pressed from Berolina Schallplatten's London recorded masters held in Ger-



many, which were one of the new line of shilling records pressed for the Bob Record Co., Ltd. of Glasgow. The giveaway dating code can be found on the Bob discs.

Lugton & Co., Ltd. began advertising as wholesale stockists of the English made Invicta Records in November 1913, which by then of course no longer showed a dating code in the pressings. The label underwent a change around December 1913 which although retaining the half Union Jack design in the upper part of the label was simply printed in gold on dark blue paper. A Mr. Athol Conway Simmons joined the Invicta Record Co., Ltd. at the age of 33, later being appointed the head of the shipping department. The German company's Invicta discs had by December 1913 reached no. 368, whereas the Invicta Record Co.'s numbers had only attained 322.

The Invicta Record Co., Ltd.'s discs were being pressed by the Crystalate Manufacturing Co., Ltd. at its works at Golden Green near Tonbridge, in Kent. Crystalate were already pressing Gramavox records for the Sound Recording Co., Ltd. of Swallow St. Piccadilly and had just begun pressing the Popular records for the same company. The Sound Recording Company's masters were at the disposal of any who wished to have pressings made from them, either with the clients' own labels, or from a number of labels which the Sound Recording Co., Ltd. itself had applied for as Trade Marks. So besides having its own wax masters processed by Crystalate, the Invicta Record Co., Ltd. in order to augment what was virtually a new start to its catalogue, had a number of its records pressed from the Gramavox Record masters and those Invicta Records are easily distinguished by their ten and three quarter inch size. Finally, on October 17th, 1913 the picture portrait of Charles Hassell, conducting the Band of H.M. Irish Guards was submitted as a line drawing to be applied as a registered Trade Mark; it was not opposed and it became registered in May 1914.

*(To be continued)*

## Two years from his centenary...

For those who still venture into the modern concert halls of London in vain hopes of hearing the occasional performance approaching those available on recordings from an earlier, more individual and exciting age, I felt brief mention must be made of a quite extraordinary piano recital I attended on the 21st June this year.

It was the 98th Birthday recital of Mieczyslaw Horszowski!! Horszowski was born on 23rd June 1892 in Poland. He received his first lessons from his mother, a competent amateur pianist. He came to Vienna in 1898 and began lessons with Theodor Leschetizky (1830-1915), one of the most important piano teachers and pedagogues of the 19th and 20th centuries – the teacher of such diverse luminaries as Paderewski and Schnabel – with whom he studied for 6 years, embarking upon the start of his long career on the concert platform in 1902. In later years, he achieved considerable renown as a chamber musician, in particular in association with Casals.

Listening to the almost note-perfect, astonishingly beautifully executed playing of the tiny figure on the stage at the Wigmore Hall last Thursday, it seemed incredible that he has been before the public playing the piano for 88 years! Even before that, almost upon his arrival in Vienna, on 9th November 1899 his own "*Marche solennelle*" was performed before Austrian Emperor Franz-Josef III!

An invitation to play at the 1983 Aldeburgh Festival has given his career in England fresh impetus – Wigmore Hall recitals in 1986 (his 80th anniversary concert there) and 1987 (his 95th birthday!) and – most incredible of all, *three Compact Disc issues* (to date!) for the American **Elektra Nonesuch** label are testament to a surely unique vitality and strength at an age when many people become afraid even to venture out of the house...

The majority of his discs have been of chamber repertoire, although a justly renowned 'Hammerklavier' Sonata and 'Diabelli' variations, as well as such things as concerti by Mozart, Chopin and Martucci (in which he is partnered by Toscanini) also exist – not to mention the latest CDs. Although this may not be our usual field, Horszowski represents a unique link with the past, of enormous interest and relevance to anyone interested in recordings of those he knew and worked with.....C.L.



# Lighter sides

## The Hon. W. Brownlow (Baritone and his Records)

*by Peter Cliffe*

Personal and career information about too many singers of the past can be infuriatingly elusive. Take Carrie Herwin (contralto) and Edgar Coyle (baritone), for example: what do we know about either of them? Only that at one time the latter was a schoolteacher in Finchley. Both made scores of records: Carrie Herwin for Columbia – probably exclusively; Edgar Coyle for Zonophone, Columbia and (I believe) for Nicole.

I was faced with much the same situation in 1981, when I began research on the Hon. W. Brownlow. From very brief entries in *Who's Who* I learned that William George Edgar Brownlow was born (they didn't say where) on February 22nd 1902, the only son of the third Baron Lurgan, who had married Lady Emily Julia Cadogan, daughter of the fifth Earl Cadogan. She died in 1909. On his father's death in 1937, the Hon. William Brownlow became Lord Lurgan.

Not a word about his life as a singer, so where to start? I obtained an address in Natal from Debbretts, and despatched a hopeful letter. Within two weeks came a friendly and helpful aerogramme from Lord Lurgan himself, no doubt much amused that I had (with his records on my mind) given him a title then

forty-four years out of date!

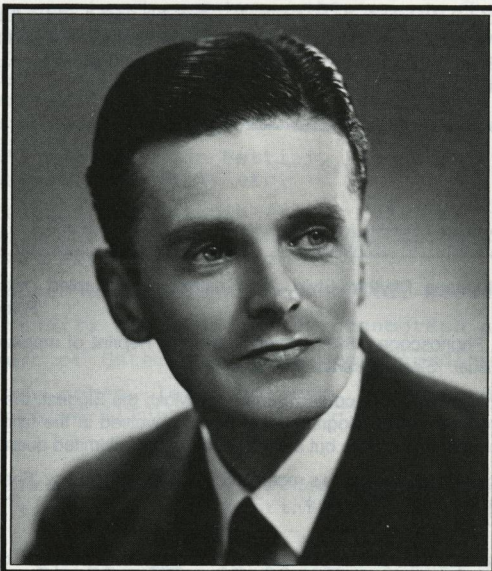
Born in London and set on a career as a concert singer, he received first-class tuition from Adelaide Rind and dame Nellie Melba. His debut took place in the Wigmore Hall, with the renowned pianist Irene Scharrer.

### The Recordings

In England he recorded only for Columbia, beginning in 1929, only eight records being made altogether. They turn up infrequently, but are a delight to hear, his warm baritone being ideal for the kind of material he selected. It may be of interest to some readers if I discuss the songs he committed to wax.

His first two sides, on DB 79, paired "I pitch my lonely caravan at night" with "I look into your garden." The former song, published in 1921, was a big success for Eric Coates, with a lyric by Annette Horey. The

reverse is less well-known. Haydn Wood (much addicted to songs about gardens – "It is only a tiny garden," "Love's garden of roses"), contributed the melody, D. Eardley-Wilmot the lyric. "Now sleeps the crimson petal" (from Tennyson's poem) and "Weep



The Rex Amherola Phonograph Co.  
37 Caledonia Street St. Johnsbury, VT 05819



you no more" (author unknown) were set to music by Roger Quilter, appearing on DB 179. They were recorded in October 1929. After these, on DB 772 came "Two eyes of grey," a long popular ballad by Daisy McGeoch (who also created "My love's grey eyes," reluctant no doubt to abandon a lucrative theme), and "I did not know," a forgotten song by G. Clifton-Bingham and H. Trotere. (Bingham achieved creative immortality by writing "Love's old sweet song" for which James Lyman Molloy composed the lilting melody, first heard in 1882).

Columbia DB 1072 provided a very famous ballad and one unknown to me. "Sylvia" was published as a song in 1914, a beautiful setting by Oley Speaks of a short poem by Clinton Scollard. (The composer is equally well-known for one of two settings of Kipling's "On the road to Mandalay," the other being by Walter Hedgcock). "Blue Moon," the backing song, was the work of Westrup and Fisher, probably Howard Fisher, composer of "An old violin." "Blue Moon" is subtitled "So people say"; there are at least three other songs called "Blue Moon," the best-known being the Rodgers and Hart hit of 1934. "This lovely rose," a song by the organist Harold Ramsay, and "When I think of you," an Edward Lockton and Arthur F. Tate collaboration, shared DB 1126. Another Ramsay song, "I still love Mary," with a lyric by Paris-born Bruce Sievier, backed by Charles & Dean's "One kind word" made up DB 1240. They were recorded in November 1933.

Brownlow's last records for Columbia were made in 1936, DB 1650 being a two-part selection of Guy d'Hardelot successes, while DB 1694 dealt similarly with ballads by Teresa del Riego, her greatest rival.

It was probably not long after this that Brownlow went to live in South Africa, touring there as well in the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. He is known to have been on tour in Australia in 1938. He had regular work in South Africa for over twenty years, singing French, Spanish and English songs for the S.A.B.C. He also turned to such shows as "The last waltz," "The maid of the mountains" and "perchance to dream" for duets as well as solos.

His few Columbia records do not entirely reflect his varied and cultured taste as a singer. His repertoire included Peter Warlock, Frederick Delius and Granville Bantock. It would be interesting to discover whether he recorded in South Africa and what songs, if any, he committed to wax there. This fine, almost forgotten singer died in February 1984.

*I wish to record my indebtedness to the late Lord Lurgan and to Florence, Lady Lurgan for their help, and for the superb photograph.*

## NEWS FROM THE BOOKLIST

B 143 - Parlophone Rhythm Style, 1946 catalogue, restapled original copies. A few only.  
**Price £2.50 UK.**

B 12 - The Phonoscope, 1899 Volume 3 issue 1. Reprint of magazine dealing with scientific inventions, acoustic and visual. (*See adjacent advertisement*).  
**Price £4.50 UK.**

B 135 - Guinness Book of Recorded Sound, the Most, the Biggest, the Smallest, etc. Many facts and details on records and companies, biographies of people involved in the talking machine industry over the years. Not entirely accurate or complete but a useful book to have. Limited quantity. **Price £6.50 UK.**

B 128 - Abbey Road. The world's most famous recording studios. Featuring many of the artistes who worked there from 1932 to 1982. Paperback.  
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*Overseas members please add 10% to cost to allow for postage. Orders from:*

**Dave Roberts,** [REDACTED]

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The extremely rare and early trade magazine The Phonoscope is almost impossible to obtain today, but it's a goldmine for pre-1900 phonograph and record information. We have obtained and reprinted the January 1899 issue for our patrons and are pleased to announce it at this time. Among the highlights of this issue:

- Full page ads for Bettini, Polyphone, Reed & Dawson, Columbia, etc.
- A Phonograph Swindle (how a "stylish couple" made thousands selling phony Edison Agencies abroad!)
- A photo and original poem by Cal Stewart
- A Newark, N.J. concert by phonograph artists
- Photo of Estella Mann before recording horns
- Trade notes, legal notices, new records, machine illustrations, etc., etc.

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## BUILDING A GRAMOPHONE

A PORTABLE gramophone is illustrated in Fig. 1, with the overall dimensions in Fig. 2. As the fittings are not of a standard size, it is advisable to have every part to hand before beginning constructional work so that items which do not tally with the accompanying drawings may be allowed for.

Below is a list of parts required for the construction of the case.

**Necessary Purchases.**—Mechanical parts needed are one double spring-driven gramophone motor, such as a

Start with the lower part of the case. This is a simple plywood box, the constructional details and dimensions of which are shown in Fig. 3. Glued butt-joints are used for fixing the sides and ends together, and the bottom is fixed to these parts by means of screws. A  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. square fillet is glued and screwed to the sides and bottom as shown, to give additional strength, while similar fillets are screwed and glued 1 in. below the upper edges of the case to support the motor board.

No.	Size in in.	Material	For
2	$16 \times 11\frac{3}{4} \times \frac{3}{16}$ ..	3 ply wood .. ..	Top of lid and bottom of case
2	$16 \times 4\frac{9}{16} \times \frac{1}{4}$ ..	5 " " .. ..	Sides of lower part of case
2	$11\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{9}{16} \times \frac{1}{4}$ ..	5 " " .. ..	Ends of lower part of case
2	$16 \times 2\frac{5}{16} \times \frac{3}{8}$ ..	5 " " .. ..	Sides of lid
2	$11 \times 2\frac{5}{16} \times \frac{3}{8}$ ..	5 " " .. ..	Ends of lid
1	$15\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{3}{8}$ ..	5 " " .. ..	Motor-board
10 ft.	$\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ ..	Hardwood .. ..	Fillets
1	$24 \times 19$ (approx.)	Rexine or leather-cloth	Lower part of case
1	$22 \times 17$ ..	" "	Lid
1	$12 \times 16$ ..	" "	Motor-board
1	$12 \times 16$ ..	" "	Lid lining
1	$2\frac{1}{4} \times 46$ ..	" "	Lid lining, sides and ends
1	$18 \times 11$ ..	Sheet zinc .. ..	Internal horn
1	$42 \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ ..	" .. ..	"
1	$17 \times 11$ ..	" .. ..	"
1	$2\frac{1}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{8} \times \frac{3}{8}$ ..	Soft sponge rubber ..	Horn mounting

Garrard, with 10 in. turntable, speed regulator, a winding handle and escutcheon for same; a swan-neck tone arm, sound box to fit same, and the following minor accessories: a brake, needle bowl, tone-arm clip, two winding-handle clips, two strap hinges and leather carrying handle, two spring-catch fasteners, screws, nuts and bolts for fixing the hinges and carrying handle, and a small quantity of glue.

The illustration shows how the ends of two of these fillets are cut away to clear the mouth of the horn, while a shaped vertical piece A (Fig. 3) takes the place of a longer vertical fillet as fitted in the other corners.

All the fixing screws with the exception of four above the level of the motor board fillets, are driven through the plywood into the fillets and not into the edges of the plywood. A



couple of dozen  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. No. 6 countersunk-headed wood screws and four  $\frac{5}{8}$  in. No. 2 screws will be required for fixing the ends to the sides. This part of the work should be done before attempting to fix the bottom. The operations for making the box are as follows.

1. Cut wood to size. 2. Mark positions where fillets are to come.
3. Fix fillets to sides and ends. 4. Assemble sides to ends. 5. Fit bottom with  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. No. 2 screws.

**Making the Lid.**—The construction

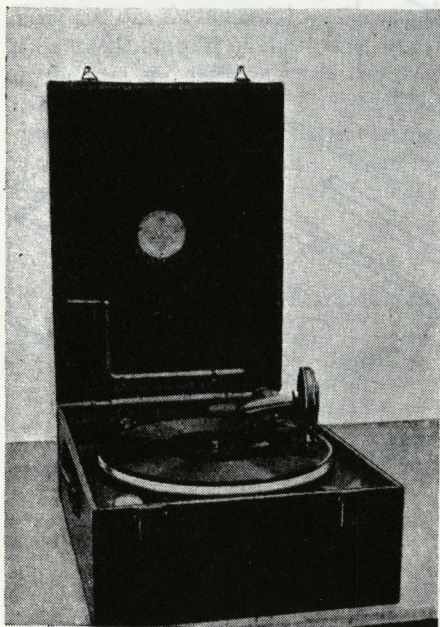


Fig. 1

of the lid is slightly more involved as three of the five plies of the side and end pieces are cut away as shown at A in Fig. 4, thus leaving a projection  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. deep for keeping the lid in position when closed.

The easiest way of forming the projection is to mark the positions at each end of the side and end pieces and clamp the work between two strips of wood about 18 in. long and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in.

wide and  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. thick. Fix the upper edge of the top strip so that it coincides with the marks on the work and use the edge for guiding a fine-toothed tenon saw. Saw very carefully to a depth of 1 ply and remove the waste with a chisel. Treat the second and then the third plies in the same way, taking care not to damage the fourth and fifth laminations.

The sides and ends may now be fastened together by means of  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. No. 3 countersunk-headed screws, and then the top fixed in position by the use of  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. No. 2 screws.

**Placing the Motor.**—In making the motor board, Fig. 5, the hole A above which the tone-arm is fixed, should not be bored until the motor and turntable have been temporarily attached to the board, as the needle in the sound-box has to be correctly tracked. To do this, first fix the sound-box to the tone-arm and insert a needle. Place the point of the needle  $\frac{1}{16}$  in. in front of the turn-table spindle, swinging the opposite end of the tone-arm round until it is central to the line B. This gives the distance x. The sound-box and tone-arm will now be in their normal positions. The outline of the base of the tone-arm can now be marked on the wood and the wood bored to suit.

As gramophone motors vary in shape and size, only the position of the spindle is shown in the drawing. The winding handle must be square to either the right-hand side or the front, as the case may be. Some idea of how the motor is fixed will be gathered from Fig. 6 which shows the motor fixed to the mounting board.

Fig. 7 shows an illustration of the lower case with the motor board removed, revealing the horn. Details of this are given in Fig. 8, but the dimensions indicated may have to be

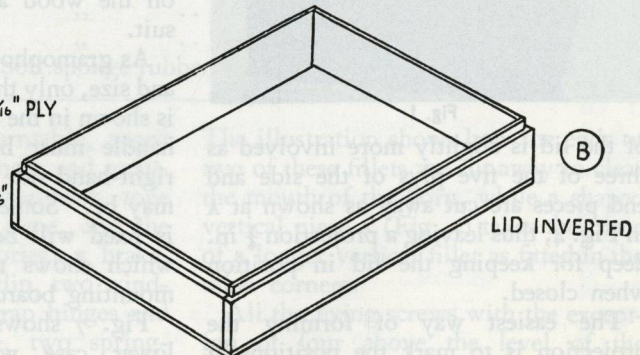
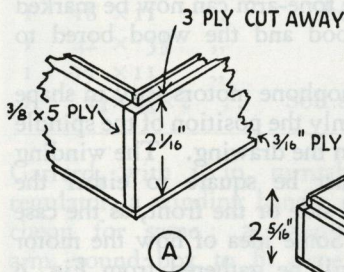
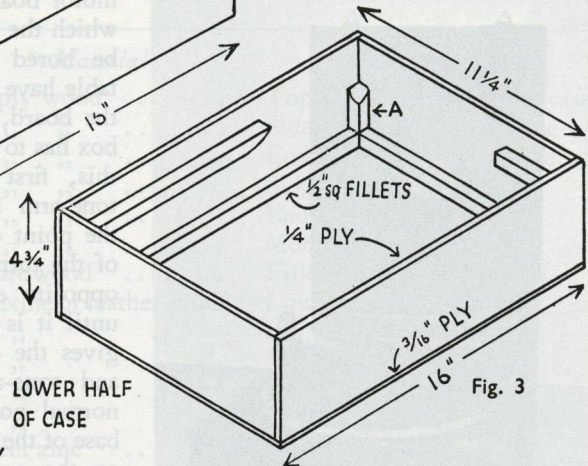
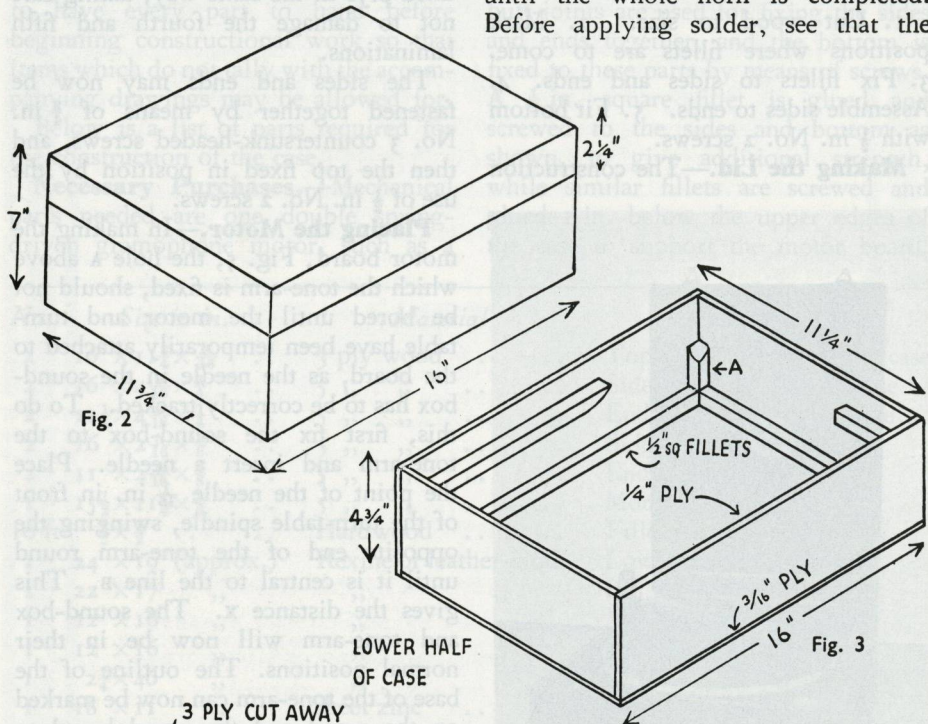


varied to suit the measurements  $x$  in Fig. 5, and to clear the motor. There should be ample clearance between the narrow part of the horn A, Fig. 8, and the winding shaft.

**The Horn.**—Make a full-sized model of the horn with thin cardboard and

the narrow end over the rectangular-shaped ring, as shown at B in Fig. 8, and solder these parts together.

A wood plug and wire may now be used to hold the four sides in place. Run a fillet of solder down each seam, remove the plug and repeat the operation until the whole horn is completed. Before applying solder, see that the



pins. This, when dissembled, will serve as templates for cutting the zinc. Cut the zinc to size, bend the flanges at

portion of zinc to be soldered is bright and clean. Scrape the parts if necessary and use a soldering flux.



Remove all grease, and paint the horn dull black on the outside and as far into the mouth as possible.

The narrow end of the horn is wedged between the motor board and flanged ring by means of a sponge-rubber washer. If rigidity cannot be secured by this method, pack some folded rag between the bottom of the horn and the bottom of the case.

Now mark where the winding crank spindle will pass through the side of the case and drill the hole.

**Covering the Case.**—Leather-cloth can be used for covering the case. First cut out the material to size, apply glue to the bottom of the lower section of the case and place it in the centre of the piece measuring  $24 \times 24$  in. Allow the glue to set, and turn up the leather-cloth at the ends of the case. Carefully cut the cloth perpendicularly close to

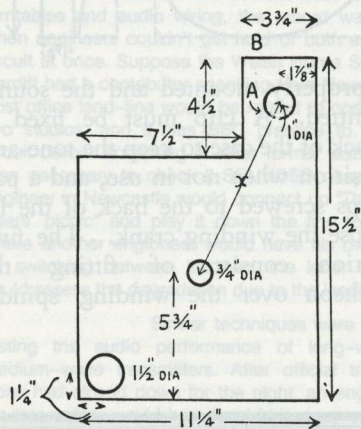


Fig. 5

the case and stick the cloth to the sides. There will now remain a square of cloth in extension to the sides. This should be cut off 1 in. from the end of the case. Turn the remaining pieces round the ends and stick them down. Each end piece may now be glued in position.

The next procedure is to glue the remaining portions of the cloth, turn them over the top edge of the case and

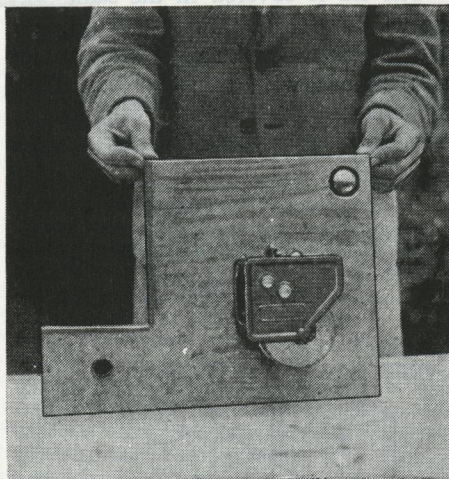


Fig. 6

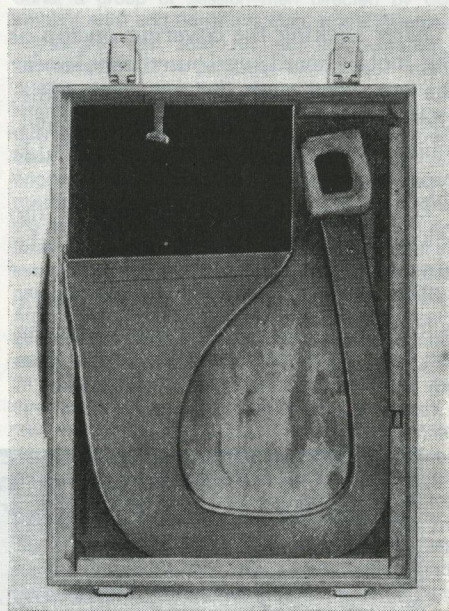


Fig. 7

stick them down inside as far as the fillers.

It should be noted that if a thick covering material is employed it may be



necessary to pare down the thickness at the joints. This can be done with a razor blade.

The lid is covered in the same way except that the cloth is turned in only as far as the shoulder. The piece for the underside of the lid is then glued in position, and this is followed by fixing a suitable lining strip at the sides and ends.

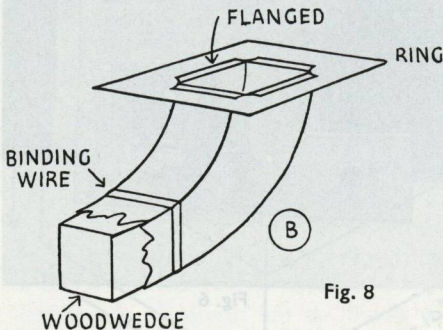


Fig. 8

After sticking the covering on top of the motor board, cut out the holes for the tone-arm and the motor spindle, and drill a hole for a needle bowl, which should be of the unspillable type.

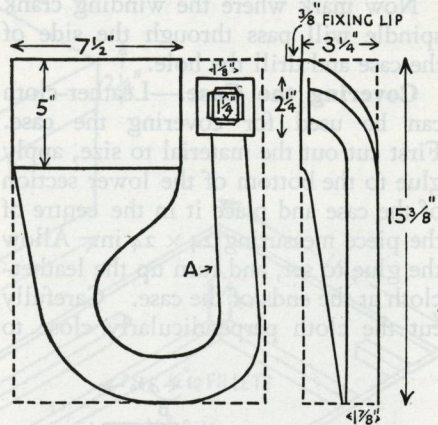
Drill small holes in the back of the lower case and the lid, and fix the hinges with small bolts and nuts.

The position of the carrying handle is in the centre of a whole side including the lid. It is fixed in the same way as

the hinges, that is, by small bolts and nuts. To give additional strength between the case and the handle, a piece of zinc, with suitable holes to allow the bolts to pass, can be used under the nuts.

The fasteners and hinges should be fitted when the lid is closed.

The motor board can now be screwed down to the supporting fillets, the tone-



arm properly mounted and the sound-box fitted. A clip must be fixed to the back of the case to keep the tone-arm in position when not in use, and a pair of clips screwed to the back of the lid to house the winding crank. The final operation consists of fitting the escutcheon over the winding spindle hole.

***This article, on constructing your own gramophone, appeared in Do-it-yourself manual from around the mid-nineteen-thirties.***

***If any readers have any similar articles that they feel would be suitable for publication please send them to the editor – the older they are the better – how about some on Phonographs.....!***



# Playback

by Peter Copeland

Today I am going to be talking about two completely different Columbia records with one factor in common. And that factor is as follows: if you play either of them within earshot of any BBC engineer of the last sixty years, you are almost certain to drive him screaming from the room.

The first is Columbia DB 955, although you probably know it better by its magenta-label reissue number, FB 2816. It is of course "The Teddy Bears' Picnic" by the BBC Dance Orchestra directed by Henry Hall. In 1935 the BBC was looking for a high quality record suitable for testing equipment, and a committee of engineers settled upon this as having the best frequency response and the least distortion of any recording then available. (It was NOT a reflection upon the presumed mental age of the engineering staff. Nor was the other side – "Hush, here comes the Bogey Man" a reflection of the military command structure they worked under!). So hundreds of copies were specially pressed, and distributed to the workshops of BBC studio-centres and transmitters.

Besides the obvious uses for testing turntables and audio wiring, the record was useful when engineers couldn't get hold of both ends of a circuit at once. Suppose the Welsh Home Service in Cardiff had a contributor speaking from Newcastle. A post office land-line would be rented to connect the two studios, and it was BBC practice to test the circuit before accepting it. After formal tests, it was then necessary to check it SOUNDED okay; so the engineer in Newcastle would connect up "The Teddy Bears' picnic" and play it down the line to Cardiff, where another engineer would have his own copy. By switching between the two, the latter engineer could assess the degradation due to the landline.

Similar techniques were used for testing the audio performance of long-wave or medium-wave transmitters. After official transmissions had closed down for the night, an engineer at the transmitter would broadcast his copy of "Teddy Bears", and other engineers could check the quality as received off-air against their own copies. Many of you will have read Jack de Manio's book, "To Auntie with love", an anthology of BBC folklore. The very first anecdote tells the story of the lady who was woken up by such tests at three in the morning. She rang Broadcasting house to complain, and conversation is

well worth reading! Fresh copies of FB 2816 were made for the BBC at intervals; presumably the artist credit of "BBC Dance Orchestra" helped with copyright problems. Collectors will sometimes find vinyl copies of FB 2816; these will be ex-BBC copies, made after EMI stopped using shellac.

By 1950 it had become obvious that recording technology had improved however. An attempt was made to break away from "Teddy Bears" by commissioning some pressings of one of Decca's first LPs, LX 3003, of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf", with BBC announcer Frank Phillips. This gave high-fidelity speech and high-fidelity music on the one record. Unfortunately, new recording characteristics were agreed internationally in 1956, and the Decca disc didn't conform; so it was necessary to try again. Even so, it's difficult to understand how the other Columbia record came to be chosen for making BBC engineers dash screaming from the room: it was one track from a long-playing record called "Dancin' Banjos". The performers were the Big Ben Banjo Band, a group of session-men directed by Columbia's Artist and Repertoire man, Norrie Paramor. The original disc, 33SX1103, was first published in October 1958. The particular track used was a medley starting with "Roll out the Barrel." Again one might suspect a jibe at some BBC engineers (now a quarter of a century more "mature" than when they'd been given "The Teddy Bears' picnic")! But the original LP wasn't circulated; instead the BBC commissioned special ten-inch vinyl pressings bearing the same music at 33 1/3 rpm, 45 rpm and 78 rpm under the number M.O.M.I. The BBC didn't adopt the international characteristic for 78 rpm recording, partly because the majority of the records in the BBC Archive were made to older specifications, partly because they were still using their own compromise characteristic on direct-to-disc acetates. Hence the 78 rpm version was cut to BBC characteristics. With three strobes it was used for all kinds of turntables. A few months later it became apparent that EMI's master had been one of the first stereo ones, since it was issued on stereo LP ESG7806 and EP SEG7961. Perhaps the plan had been to do stereo tests too, although this never came about. Nevertheless, The Big Ben Banjo Band provided the standard BBC engineering test for thirty years at least, with only the BBC Dance Orchestra relieving the monotony. Now, pardon me while I dash screaming from the room.....



# Letters

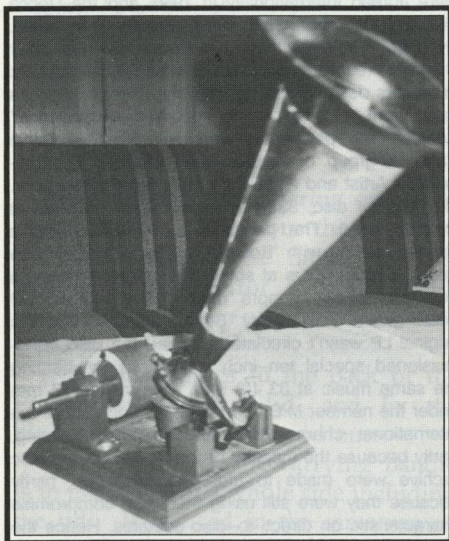
Dear Editor,

some few years ago I bought a model of a hand-driven phonograph which states, on a label at the back of the base: *Edison Phonograph Famous Inventors series by Rovex Scale Models Limited, Westwood, Margate Kent*. The cylinders are wax, the base is woodgrained plastic – there is even a shaving device! The conical horn is cardboard with a plastic flare. Enclosed are some photos.

Regards,

Rolf Rekdal, [redacted]

NORWAY.



Dear Editor,

I have only just got around to reading Peter Adamson's letter on the subject of stroboscopic patterns on records (February Hillandale). His comments on the Kid-Kord records do not, I submit bear true. I have some of these records in their original album. Nowhere is there a mention of the stroboscopic ring, but if played at a speed of 74rpm whilst viewed under a 50Hz lamp, the printed ring appears

to be – more or less – stationary. There is a slight ripple effect due to the imprecise printing of the segments; they are not equispaced. Listening to these nursery rhymes at a speed of 74rpm does, in my view, render them "in pitch," whereas at 78rpm they are quite out of pitch. I have not seen any printed matter for the Kid-Kord machines; perhaps another member has, and can report if there was any reference to the use of the rings as a strobe.

Yours sincerely,

John Booth, [redacted]

[redacted] Rugby CV22 6QD.

Dear Editor,

I have come across another British label which had stroboscopic markings on it. It is a 12" Esquire, Catalogue No. 6-004 (Matrix Nos. – Esq. 853/854). The title is "Paul Jones", parts 1 and 2 performed by Norman Grant & His Orchestra for Dancing. The label is coloured red with gold print. I suspect it may be post World War Two so it could well be outside the scope of Peter Copeland's article in the October Hillandale News. Perhaps Peter can confirm whether or not it falls within the scope of his article.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Hamilton, [redacted]

[redacted] Fife KY15 4EP.

## New Patent History

We hear from Allen Koenigsberg, publisher of *The Antique Phonograph Monthly* that his new book on **The Patent History of the Phonograph 1877-1912**, listing 2,117 United States Sound Recording Patents with additional references to British, French, German, Swiss, Danish and Austrian patents will be published shortly, and all those interested are invited to write to him at [redacted] **Brooklyn, New York 11226, USA**. A self-addressed stamped envelope or reply-paid coupon is advised. The cost is not known at the time of writing, but it is hoped to review this valuable reference work at an early date, and it may well be added to the Society Booklist.

George Frow.



## Offspring of Berliner at the Opera

Dear Editor,

I should like to reply to Peter Adamson's constructive commentary on my article on Berliner at the Opera (*Hillandale No. 173*). Far from being an authority on Berliner, I – and most of the rest of the world – look to Peter as the guru in this area!

I was indeed aware of the limitations of Bauer (some of which I mentioned in my article) but this was the only general source at my disposal. I have since looked at Alan Kelly's new book although as Peter says as it covers only the Italian catalogue it would not complete my opera listing. Again, Peter knows much more about the Berliner/G&T connection than I do and my terminus ante quem of the end of 1901 is rather arbitrary, adopted partly to make my article rather more interesting! I understand that Berliner in the UK had become G&T though some braches on the continent continued the old style. So that is why Agussol, Michailova and Figner appear on my listing as Berliner artists, even though many of their records were strictly post-Berliner. I am also obliged to Peter for clearing up the mystery of the Giannini records; I was not aware that Bauer ignored the re-recording suffixes. Regarding Galan, Galassi, 54112 and 54122: Peter confirms that 54112 is by Galan and that Bauer is wrong. I mentioned the similarity of the catalogue numbers as Bauer certainly lists Galan on 54122 with Galassi on 54112, and I wondered whether the unlikely chance had arisen that Peter had slipped up in describing 54112! Very presumptuous of me, but at least now the mystery has been solved....apart from the question of quite who Galassi is.....?

It would indeed be interesting to have a complete catalogue of the recorded operatic repertoire available by the turn of the century – something a little beyond this writers's sources or patience!

George Taylor, [REDACTED]  
Harrogate, North Yorkshire.

## "The Lesson with the Fan"

Dear Editor,

In Peter Cliffe's article on Guy D'Hardelot (*Hillandale, April issue*), he stated that "The lesson with a Fan" was a failure in that it was not only unpopular but had never been recorded. The song was written especially for Emma Calve, a close friend of the composer and she featured it in her repertoire, with considerable success – as a programmed item or as an encore.

In the early 1930s, Supervia became interested in it, due to her accompanist Ivor Newton. I remember him relating in December 1972, how the song was brought to her attention: in 1931, Mme. D'Hardelot visited Supervia at her home. She was a very old lady by then, but was fond of singing her own songs; she had a curious voice, like a basso profundo with a cold. She sang the song in this strange voice, with gestures of eyes, eyebrows and mouth to augment the vocal line.

Supervia recorded the song on 7 March 1932 and it was issued in the UK only on Parlophone-Odeon RO 20186; it is superb – a lesson not only in how to use a fan but in how to sing the song! I would urge all collectors without a copy to acquire one!

J.D.Bain, [REDACTED] Glasgow.

## London Meetings

September 18th – George Woolford – "The Twenty-Five."

November – Len Watts – To be Announced (*We may be able to hold this meeting at Phillips Fine Art Auctioneers, the evening before their Mechanical Music sale – To be confirmed.*)

December – Christmas Free For All (*members are invited to bring along their own selections to be played at the meeting – details of the evening's theme to be announced.*)

**Unless otherwise stated, meetings are held at 7.00pm at**

**The Billomsbury Institute, 253 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W.C.2.**



## Our Flag

Dear Editor,

In response to Peter Clife's enquiry with reference to "Our Flag" record number B.17 in the June edition of *Hillandale News*, this was probably first issued under its same number as a "Stella Gramophone Record" in August 1912. Because "Stella" was a registered trade mark of Pathe in London, Blum & Co., Ltd., the proprietors of the label, were compelled to change the name of their disc which they did by the expediency of oversticking the word "Stella" with the word "Victory". B.17 thereby became a "Victory Gramophone Record". If re-pressing became necessary its future label name would have been shortened to "Victory Record".

Blum & Co., Ltd.'s British recordings were processed and manufactured by the Kalliope Musikwerke A.G. of Germany but, by the end of 1912, the relationship between the two companies was broken with some acrimony and Blum & Co., Ltd. lost access to its matrices held by the German company who, now in competition with the London company opened their own business in London, almost opposite Blum & Co., Ltd. in Old Street, E.C. and began selling "our Flag" records from Blum's matrices, in early 1913. (With the eventual repossession of its matrices, it is possible that B.17 was later re-pressed once again, as a "Diploma Record" by Blum & Co., Ltd.).

For the history of Blum & Co., Ltd.'s labels and matrices I recommend that Peter reads my article published in *Talking Machine Review International* Number 75, published in Autumn 1988 (13 pp.), obtainable from fellow member Ernie Bayly, Dorset, BH6 4JA. An enquiry to Ernie will provide information as to price.

Regards,

Frank Andrews,

London NW10 0HA.

## A further word on Buchmann and Meyer

Dear Editor,

May I take a few lines to reply to a point raised in the Letters pages of the last *Hillandale News*, on page 53, Mr. H. Barry Raynaud's "On the Dark Side", which was in turn a reply to my article "Why are Records black?"

Mr. Raynaud has unfortunately misquoted my original article and also appears to have slightly misunderstood my remarks on the Buchmann and Meyer system, leading to his making a statement I wish to correct. In my original article I was talking about the optical image reflected from disc grooves and first described in print by Buchmann and Meyer. What I originally said was: "If one measured the apparent widening of the reflected beam, they proved it was proportional to the to-and-fro velocity of the stylus which cut the sound waves." I stick by that assertion. The image width is indeed proportional to stylus VELOCITY, not AMPLITUDE. Buchmann and Meyer's paper is in German ("Eine neue optische Messmethode für Grammophonplatten", *Electrische Nachrichten-Technik*, 1930, 7, page 147), so I'm sure you won't want me to quote from it here. But a rigorous geometrical proof in English forms "Appendix E" of J. W. Godfrey and S. W. Amos' book "Sound Recording and Reproduction" (London, Iliffe & Sons, 1952), pages 207 to 212.

This is a small but very interesting and very important point and while not wishing to enter a protracted correspondence on the matter I thought it was important to get this matter sorted out. Hoping these remarks will prove of interest to your readers,

Regards,

Peter Copeland,

Bristol.

## A Note on Correspondence

Any correspondence, Reviews, articles and related matter you would like to be considered for inclusion in *The Hillandale News* must reach the Editor **not later than 6 weeks before the first day of the month of publication**. Hence the deadline for the October edition will be **15th AUGUST**.

☛ Please note that views expressed in articles or letters published in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor.



## The Indian Record Collectors' Society

by Michael Kinnear

On February 24th, 1990, the first meeting of the Indian Record Collectors' Society was held at Navy Nagar, Bombay. This meeting was the result of a large response from record collectors all over Western India following some newspaper articles about record collecting by Suresh Chandvankar, as well as an article on recording music by fellow CLPGS member Michael Kinnear. The Society is open to all collectors, regardless of their field of interest, both Indian and Western, and will shortly be producing its own magazine. The Society welcomes any enquiries about membership, or appeals for information, which should be sent to the address below.

Since the Gramophone company established its record pressing plant at Sealdah, Calcutta in 1908, the issue of discs – both Indian and Western – has been enormous. Of particular interest to those used to European or American issues is the fact that often Indian discs contained alternative takes not issued elsewhere! Also, unlike England, Indian bazaars and markets still contain a wealth of machines and discs to be found.

*Interested persons should contact:-*

**Suresh Chandvankar,**

**Bombay 400 005, Maharashtra, INDIA.**

## LP, CD and Cassette Reviews

**EMI Comedy Classics (Double cassettes):-**

**ECC 1 – "Beyond the Fringe 1961 – 1964."**

**ECC 2 – "Flanders and Swann 1959 – 1960."**

**ECC 3 – "Woody Allen 1964 – 1968."**

**ECC 4 – "The Goon Show 1956 – 1959."**

Humour is the perception of the ludicrous elements in life around us in its various forms, or delight in its incongruities. Satire is also humorous, but adds a little sting or ridicule. Here are four very different types of humour, which I am sure many

readers will recall, not realising how long ago they were recorded. Humour can take many forms from the work of a single "stand-up" comedian to satirical revue by groups. Satire and humour must state a point without the amelioration of 'however' or 'but' and therein lies the fun and strength. In a visual form, on film or television, we have "situation comedy". In all forms the fun is accentuated by an unexpected finale to the joke or scenario. To get the full fun from these reissues, one must recall what items were in the news when they were originally recorded, and who was in politics.

In the "Beyond the Fringe" Company Dudley Moore, who was a musical scholar, gives stinging variations on Schubert Lieder, Britten's spurious folksongs and Kurt Weill songs. Jonathan Miller reminds us vividly of philosopher Bertrand Russell and Alan Bennett portrays a typical person of 40-plus years ago reflecting on the 'In Memoriam' column of a local newspaper and funerals (in fact true to what I have actually heard!), though here the emphasis makes it humorous. This emphasis makes the typically non-sensical application of a one-legged man for the role of Tarzan very funny. While many of the sketches are by individuals, there are those by the whole Company, such as "Civil War" and "The End of the World." These two cassettes give us twenty-five performances that together combine to give a program of sophistication and comedy. Paxton Whitman joined the Company on Broadway – and leaves us with the problem of what is the difference between a freedom-fighter and a terrorist?

Now from a sedate company to a sedate duo....The Flanders and Swann duo 'made their names' in their shows "At the Drop of a Hat" and "At the Drop of Another Hat". Donald Swann was the pianist and Michael Flanders had the beard!!! Without raking through lists, I do not know which was their first recorded joint composition but "I'm a gnu" was the first I heard, then "A transport of Delight" about London buses. (They said they had just seen one labelled "private" but realised when it was a 'General'. An 'in-joke' for older residents!). The "Song of Reproduction" has nothing to do with biology or genetics, but knocks we who listen to records!!! Some of their songs are pleasantly amusing, like "The Hippopotamus", "Misalliance" (about the dire aspects of climbing plants twining in different directions), "Les Olividados", "Madeira M'dear". Some have little barbs of satire, such as "Greensleeves"; and two musical 'take-offs' – "Je suis le tenebreux" and "In the desert", on French and one Russian. "Slow Train", based on the names of railway stations then shortly to be closed (by 'Beeching's law') that



even in its day caused nostalgia. "I'll wind" is a patter song based on a movement of one of Mozart's Horn Concertos. "All Gall" is a clever kick at General de Gaulle, whose politics had become somewhat obstructive in Britain just then. There is a little chat between each song to introduce the next, mostly containing sly topical witticism. From the beginning of recordings there have been duos in revues or as individual acts. You will find Flanders and Swann are among the very best of these, whatever your age, and whatever records you have already.

Moving on to a faster delivery – enormously funny – we have American, Woody Allen.....a "stand-up" comedian working alone. These programmes were recorded in intimate night-clubs so Allen's delivery is somewhat like a confidant telling his audience privately about his personal life experiences. The note with the cassette said Allen had "some twenty-five years already perfected that fresh, madly inspired humour that cannot be mistaken for anyone else." To be successful, a comedian MUST remain an individual. Allen is inspired by topics which escaped others, so increasing his individuality. He was Jewish and like other comedians of his faith employs some of its traits (or traits others suppose them to have) to supply an 'edge' to some of his jokes (he refers to a waiter being "topless" because he was not wearing his skullcap!). All the while when listening, like when listening to, say, Bob Hope, George Burns, Jack Benny, we British must remember that he is American otherwise some points of the humour are lost. This would apply to a comedian from any other nation, but as Americans speak a language which approximates our own, we might tend to interpret their jokes from a British viewpoint. Fortunately the majority of the jokes here would be equally funny in the setting of any nation. But, the Americans seem to speak about psychiatry and its allied sciences far more than we do. I like his jokes – such as that about the school-fellow bully Floyd and how later in life they became friends when Allen 'took a thorn from his paw'; or about his dog which stuttered....the strange law of New York State....the Moose story....the "Swan Lake" ballet that was 'rigged' by bookmakers....the night he sold \$2,000 worth of Israel Bonds to the Klu Klux Klan....the chain-gang of convicts that escaped by posing as a giant charm-bracelet....and many others. We hear the audience reaction – and in one place the laugh of one lady interrupted him, and even put him off his stride, but probably he was reacting visually!!.....(The only limitation of sound-recording!). So here we have a fine recording of a top American comedian in full flight of his individuality and eccentric humour.

The Goon Shows were a relatively short-lived series of BBC radio programmes (when compared with the immortality of some other dreary and boring shows). Here we have four of them, "Tales of Old Dartmoor," "Dishonoured," "A Tale of Men's Shirts" and "The Scarlet Capsule." Each has a basic story line which is diverted, ad-libbed to, and pursued to a conclusion with many lunatic hilarities perpetrated by Harry Secombe, Spike Milligan and Peter Sellers who created several characters with different voices. As I recall, many of the Goon Shows had musical interludes provided by Max Eldray and/or Ray Ellington. These have been removed from the episodes on these cassettes, but I suspect I hear the deep gravelly voice of Mr. Ellington in character in a few places. Their omission in no way detracts from the comedy-story-line. The Goon Shows were a very specialised humour, which might not be to the taste of all. But if you were a fan, these cassettes will fulfill your quest for nostalgia. "The Scarlet Capsule" was inspired by the BBC serial "Quatermass and the pit." "A Tale of Men's Shirts" reveals an attempt to discover the Nazis' secrets weapon. "Dishonoured" is a reversal of the theme of someone going out to the colonies to prove himself a man or to absolve himself of some guilt, while "Tales of Old Dartmoor" explains why the present Dartmoor Prison is only a cardboard replica.

A recording in whatever form, is a wonderful souvenir of the show one has attended. I have been to many over the years and have found that artists of all types (not only humorous) benefit from being free of the restriction of the recording, broadcasting or film studio. This set of cassettes, being from actual performances brings us the special feeling of having been there too.

If you are too young to recall the programmes reviewed here, I'm sure you'll find your purchase rewarding....Old lags like me will enjoy reviving their youth!!!

Ernie Bayly

#### A CORRECTION

Frank Andrews points out that in part 1 of his Barraud series he stated that Empire records had the same artist credits as Dacapo issues, the source of their masters – he would like to modify this regarding orchestral discs, which were probably labelled Empire or Empire London Orchestra, in lieu of the Dacapo credit. Additionally, he would like to make clear that Charles Penrose's Dacapo recordings were the first he made for any disc company.



## Paradise Lost

**"Berlin 1926 – 1929 : A Paradise Lost".**  
*Recordings of the Dajos Bela Orchestra with*  
*vocals by Richard Tauber. (BBC CD 754).*

"La Traviata" Fantasia; "Waltz Medley" from "Gypsy Love"; "I'm looking for something"; "Hand-some Gigolo"; "Listening to the violin"; "O Sole Mio"; "Gold and Silver Waltz"; "Serenata"; "Narcissus"; "Wenn der weisse Flieder blüht"; "Zigeunerweisen"; "Sonny Boy"; "Casino Tanze" Waltz; "Du bist mein stern"; "Ideale"; "Vier worte mocht'ich dir jetzt sagen"; "Heimweh"; "Kaiserwaltz". (Items marked with an asterisk are with Richard Tauber).

If there is something pleasant that is missing from the world of the last forty or fifty years it is the small orchestras that used to be found in restaurants and hotels and, if one 'took the waters,' the spas. They died during the war years and their successors hardly exist anywhere in more than perhaps a trio, and even the Corner Houses in which they played have been swept away. Familiar were the names of the providers of this sort of music between the wars and fortunately the gramophone captured many of them for us to enjoy today – Marke Weber, Albert Sandler, J. H. Squire, Edith Lorand, David de Groot and Dajos Bela who is featured on this BBC CD issue. There were hundreds like these all over Europe and in outposts of the British Empire, in the hotels and clubs where the local ex-patriate communities were wont to gather.

This record gives us the Dajos Bela orchestra in easily digestible repertoire – Strauss and Lehar, operetta and film music and, with Tauber, some light songs including Jolson and Berlin. An irresistible example of this type of orchestra at its very best is the track of the very familiar "Gold and Silver Waltz" is also a joy to listen to for the beautifully disciplined orchestral work. Perfect, but in the other direction Nevin's "Narcissus" is just not Bela's type of peice. Tauber was already well established in opera but happy to make records like these – at a reputed 20,000 Marks per session, in spite of which he was pursued towards the end of his life by creditors.

The transfers, from very clean copies, have not been overly 'doctored' and the perspective remains bright. These performances evoke an atmosphere of Berlin in the 1920s much more agreeably than the coarser digressions of "Cabaret" and Kurt Weill.

*George Frow*

## Book Reviews

**"Edison Disc Artists and Records 1910 – 1929"**  
*by R. Wile and R. Dethlefsen – Addendum of*  
*new material. (*  
*Bakersfield, CA 93306, USA. \$16.95, pp.96).*

Those who own or recollect Ray Wile and Ron Dethlefsen's 1985 book on this subject will be pleased to know of this collection of more recently researched supplementary material. The seams in the Edison mine are many but are often hidden in the dark, and fortunately our two compilers – helped by Ben Tongue who lives near the site – have uncovered half as much new material again as the original book held, and much of the earlier work has been expanded or revised. We now see all the Advance Lists of the Needls Cut Discs to 1929; the full list of 56 LPs; notes on standard 12" discs; Morse Code Specials; the Midmer-Losh Organ; and Edison's own "Let us not forget." Full-colour comes out very well, as do photographs of artists and record labels – the etched variety can be a nightmare – and it is well printed on quality stock with an illustrated cover. Combined with the original edition, we have a most informative pair of books that are hard to put down. The numbering system leaves something to be desired however. The new pages are meant to be integrated with the original, but one would need to be a bookbinder; in retrospect both would have been better looseleaf. If – as we all hope – even more material is unearthed the whole pagination will become even more confusing. Apart from this small problem this is all exciting stuff and deserves every success.

*George Frow*

## The Third Rust...?

**"London Musical Shows on Record 1889–1989",** *by Robert Seeley & Rex Bunnett*  
*(General Gramophone Publ., Ltd.,*  
*Middlesex, HA3 0HA).*

This book is, in effect, the third edition of Brian Rust's "London Musical Shows on Record 1894–1954" originally published in a duplicated limited edition of 200. The authors acknowledge their indebtedness to this, and to the second edition by



Rust and Bunnett and it is clear that Rust's work is the basis on which the present work has been prepared.

The body of the book is an alphabetical list of musical productions in London with composer, lyricist and librettist credits and the theatre and date of the first performance indicated. There is also a list of principal members of the cast. Under each show are listed recordings made by the original cast and recordings made by others of any parts of the show not recorded by the original cast. This format is an improvement over the previous edition in which the recordings were listed by artist name in a special artist listing. The book has one serious flaw however – matrix numbers are not included! I should have thought that in these days when discography has developed into a science almost, matrix numbers would have been considered essential. Furthermore, precise recording dates are not given. They are taken to be contemporaneous with the running dates of the show unless otherwise stated and even when they are stated in more detail, only the year is given. To find recording dates and matrix numbers you have to refer to the previous Rust/Bennett edition! However, two useful features of this edition are a cast members' and a song index. There is no chronological list of productions as there were in the previous two editions and fewer unissued recordings are included. In spite of its deficiencies however, this book is essential to the musical comedy lover – although ideally it should be used in conjunction with the Rust/Bennett edition.

Barry Badham

## London Reviews

One of the true signs of Spring is the annual appearance of our regular March speaker Chris Hamilton from the Kingdom of Fife. I sometimes have visions of Chris spending his dark winter evenings huddled in a croft at the wrong end of some snow-swept glen preparing his March talk fortified with nothing more than a large glass of 20-year-old malt and his collection of records! Whatever Chris's mode of working, I can tell those members who were unable to make this meeting that they missed a treat. He supplemented his talk on The Gramophone Record as an Historic Document with slides of the discs ably screened by Len Watts. I will not enumerate all the records – suffice to say they were all spoken word recordings from the period 1899 to 1934, by national, political, military, royal, sporting or

spiritual leaders. They were as diverse as a recording made in the field during the Ludendorff offensive by General Pershing in 1918, on a Columbia "Nation's Forum" record, to Don Bradman telling us "How it's done" in 1930, again on Columbia. We heard the voice of Ellen Terry declaiming "The Quality of Mercy" speech from "Merchant of Venice" in a remarkably modern style I thought. Perhaps the strangest record was Viscount Galway's HMV disc of "Hunting Calls" from 1913. I simply cannot conjure up in my mind a picture of the Jorrock-like figure of Galway dressed in full pinks with horn emitting ridiculous calls in front of the recording horn at the HMV studios in London! I wonder what Will Gaisberg thought of it all?

The premise Chris tried to get across in his paper was that sound records have an important function as historic documents in their own right. He argued that these records are an important reflection from the time in which they were made and deserve to be taken seriously by those who claim to be interested in discovering our past. As always he found a large and receptive audience to hear his talk, and he sent us away delighted to have heard some of these valuable and scarce records and pondering the potential of the gramophone record as a historic source worthy of our attention. Many thanks to Chris for a delightful evening – I know that I speak for everyone when I say how much we look forward to next March's Chris Hamilton evening!

Peter Martland, March 1990.

The late George Baker visited our society some years ago and in making reference to our magazine averred that we were "good readers." He would have to withdraw that remark today – only some ten members turned up at the Pyrford meeting on 13 May 1990, some saying they had only just heard of it. A notice was published in the April Hillandale – it was a pity the turnout was so low, as there was plenty to eat and drink as well as hear!

Interesting machines on display included a Gem with "Variol" attachment, a device which allowed the machine to play 4-minute cylinders without altering the gearing. Additionally, a Fireside and Opera, a 1912 Monarch and a G&T "Sound Arm" machine (on which the sound arm is parallel and does not rise and fall, only swinging – the sound-box itself rises and falls independently). Such machines are rare as many were converted to conventional tone-arms early on) were also to be seen. One non-gramophone item of interest was a small organ, the "Autophone," barrel-operated and with the pallets visible, the reeds being activated by pressure instead of the more usual vacuum.



Only two days after the Pyrford meeting Peter Adamson, our intrepid Berliner enthusiast travelled once more from the kingdom of Fife to present us with an interesting talk on harpsichord recordings. These are a good deal more numerous than might at first be thought; the title of Peter's talk – "No Wanda" – also gives a clue to the absence from his program of the first name that pops into most peoples' minds on the mention of her particular instrument!

Interest in the harpsichord had waned to almost nothing by the forties, except at the hands of Landowska and the Dolmetschs. Many harpsichodists are very obscure, there being no mention of them in most reference books. About 40% of all harpsichord recordings have interestingly been made by women, one of the first of whom was Violet Gordon Woodhouse. One of the earlier recordings Peter played was made in 1913, on the Favourite label, and is anonymous; a Pleyel harpsichord is noted and at this time Pleyel had made a harpsichord especially for Landowska so it is not impossible that this disc is actually of her!

The Dolmetsch family, prime movers in the revival of the harpsichord, featured heavily on Columbia and Decca. Much of the typical harpsichord repertoire – Scarlatti, Couperin etc. – had been recorded however by pianists; when electrical recording arrived, the engineers tended to fade out any of the mechanical noises associated with the instrument, which may well have something to do with its decline in popularity. Further into the electrical recording era however the technical limitations were overcome to a greater degree – we heard a superb recording of Anna Linde made by Parlophone, as well as a 1934 Anthologie Sonore of Pauline Aubert, a 1936 Gamut of Ernst Victor Wolff (a pupil of Scharenka) and a 1940 Decca of Alice Ehlers (a pupil of Landowska).

Other records included Albert Coates' recording of the Bach B Minor Mass with harpsichord continuo; a Polydor recording of the "Suite la Flute de Sans Souci", anonymous harpsichord; and the 1926 recording of de Falla playing his own harpsichord Concerto, written three years earlier. Finally the harpsichord sounded a popular note in Artie Shaw's "Special Delivery Stomp" and Mead Lux Lewis's boogie woogie – although the latter once again suffered from over protective engineers! All in all a very comprehensive program on a much neglected instrument – our thanks to Peter!

Len Watts, 13 & 15 May 1990

## ARSC/IASA/CAML Conference 1990

Nearly 200 representatives from 20 countries worldwide attended a joint conference of sound archivists held at the Canadian Museum of Civilisation in Ottawa from May 7th – 10th. The organisations involved were the International Association of Sound Archives, the Association for recorded Sound Collections and the Canadian Association of Music Libraries. The many wide ranging sessions on sound restoration included that of Toscanini's "Hymn to the Nations" by the Library of Congress and the 1937 Selenophone recordings of the Slatzburg Festival; the transfer of 78s to compact disc; as diverse topics as Gregorian Chant, the recently discovered acetates of Eubie Blake and W.C.Handy to "Drop-in Records" whose content was not without some scurrility. In a brave demonstration session making comparison between the pre-war realisation of the Mapleson cylinders with the more recent transfer resulted in the audience preferring the earlier versions! This was attributed to the deterioration in the wax cylinders in the fifty years between the two attempts. The best sound restoration as far as this correspondent is concerned came from Seth Winner (New York Public Library) featuring "The Original Sources to the V-Disc Sessions" in tribute to Benny Goodman. Excellent as were almost all the presentations perhaps the greatest success of the conference was in bringing together so many non-English speaking countries – including Austria, Denmark, Italy, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Puerto Rico, Spain, Sweden, Holland, Switzerland and West Germany. Putting the English speakers to shame was the fluency in our tongue of representatives from these countries, not only in their prepared presentations but in response to off-the-cuff questions too. The BBC was much in evidence in the persons of Dave Price (Head of Recording Services, BBC Radio) and Mark Jones (Manager of the Sound Archive). Other British names mentioned in more than one language included George Frow – rumours of a revised cylinder publication – and, of course, Frank Andrews who is regarded as a more valuable research tool than any computer!

Dick Spottiswood was an estimable controller in the presentation of the various sessions and Fred Granger of the host establishment not only chaired the organising committee but provided every possible medium for the presentation of material,



whether audio, visual or both. The conference concluded with a cruise along the Ottawa river and a grand banquet at The National Arts Centre. At my table – one of many – were two Austrians including Dr. Dietrich Schuller of the Phonogrammarchiv, Vienna, Giorgio Adamo of the Discoteca di Stato, Italy, a representative from Switzerland, Dr. Christopher Roads from the National Sound Archive and that voluble record guru from the United States, Dr. Michael Biel. In the euphoria of the occasion a challenge as to who could produce the best dubs from celluloid cylinders was issued and accepted. More possibly about this in the future.

I was loth to leave the banquet early for the dubious pleasure of an overnight stay in Ottawa Airport but was sustained both by the quality and gargantuan quantity of the meal and the warmth of friendship engendered by the many conversations over the previous four days. Next year's conference is to be held in May at Georgia State University, Atlanta, USA.

*Joe Pengelly, May 1990.*

## *From the Rostrum*

Phillips two most recent sales of Mechanical Music saw a good mixture of mahines – with a few surprises! In the November 15 sale, an Edison Class M of c.1889 made £1,500. It was fitted as a "Portable Exhibition Outfit" and was in a more ornate case than normal. It had resided for many years in a family barn; although the eletric motor was original it was not in working order. However it did include numerous listening tubes with a brass gallery allowing up to eight listeners, and both a Standard and Model A speaker. Another machine designed for public performance was the Columbia Twentieth Century Premier (Type BC). Although noted in their day for their

volume the adjustment of the complicated frictionre-producer seems to be a lost art. This example, in working order and with a 2 1/2" horn went for £900. The highest priced phonograph was an Opera – inspite of a non-original Cygnet horn and missing lid it sold for £1,800. Other machines faired well too – £1,000 for a Red Gem, even one so immaculate as this must be something of a saleroom record.

The gramophone section was equally lively. A G&T Monarch with double spring motor and fluted mahogany horn made £900. It was beautifully preserved and original – even down to the newspaper from 1924 in the bottom of the case. Although no comlete EMGs featured, a 36" E.M.Ginn horn sold for £1,000, while two MK X6 Oversize horns made £750 and £700. Six EMG and Expert soundboxes went for £600 – and tin enthusiasts pushed a lot of 30 tins to £300!

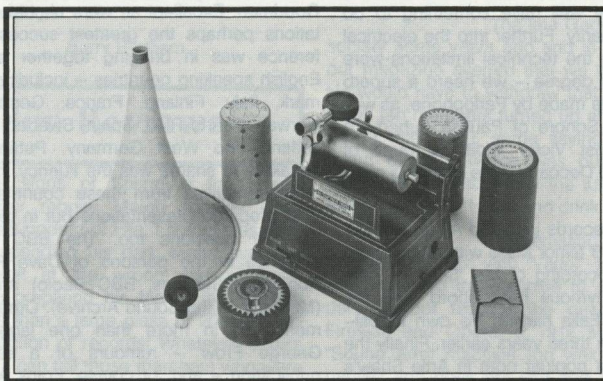
The sale of April 2 was smaller, but prices were equally strong; a Gem at £260, an HMV Re-entrant 193 at £1,400 and an HMV 109 at £95 and a 103 at £110. A lovely Pathe Gaulois, complete with boxed recorde and reproducer made £480 and an EMG MK X6 Oversize with Garrard electric motor and a 33 1/4" horn soared to £2,400. For the true enthusiast, a G&T New Styla No.5 base – lacking horn, travelling arm and sound box – went for £400; the vendor in this case was a descendant of two employees of Hayes, one working on the motor side while the other assembled cases and the item was

always known to them as a prototype. In fact it appeared to be a combination of a No.5 and a Trade Mark. while a Senior Monarch of c.1910 with dog-tooth pillars and green Morning Glory horn(of post-1920) made £650. An Edison Disc Model A Moderne sold

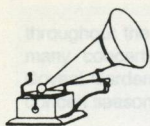
for only £320, after many years in a damp shed.

Phillips next sale will be on November 21 and entries may be submitted through to the end of September.

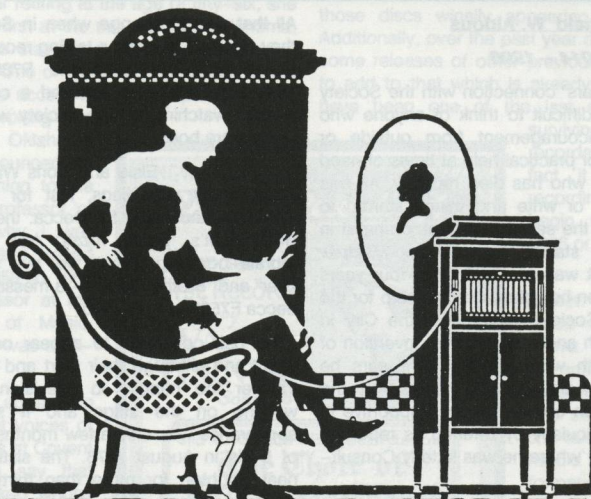
*George Glasstris*







# The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society



*The National*

## Phonofair and AGM

**SATURDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 1990**

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# Obituaries

## Donald W. Aldous

1914 – 1990

In many years' connection with the Society and the hobby it is difficult to think of anyone who has given more encouragement from outside or come up with ideas or practical help at times of need than Donald Aldous, who has died recently. All one had to do was ring or write and things started to happen. Donald was the senior technical journalist in the country, having started to write for *'Popular Radio'* in 1933, but it was not until thirty-four years later that we met when he volunteered to help for the Exhibition that the Society mounted in the City in 1967 to mark the 90th anniversary of the invention of the phonograph. With words in the right ears he coaxed equipment and distinguished visitors from the industry and from then on was always supportive in the background, particularly by offering us reporting space in *'Hi-Fi News'* where he was latterly Consulting Editor.

A man of broad interests, particularly in the audio, Radio and Film fields, he was the author of several books on sound, founder of the British Sound Recording Association and of course a practical audio engineer. Donald was the most pleasant of men and had a vast number of friends throughout the audio industry; he will be greatly missed especially by those of us who have reason to remember his kindnesses.

George Frow

## Elsie Waters

1895 – 1990

Elsie Waters who, with her sister Doris formed the comedy act *'Gert and Daisy'* died on June 14th, at the age of 95.

The sisters performed together for more than fifty years and Gert and Daisy became two of the best loved characters in British showbusiness. They were favourites of Winston Churchill and even had elephants at London Zoo named after them! The duo began their career with charity concerts in friends' houses...Elsie playing the violin and Doris the piano. After a non-too-auspicious debut at the London Alhambra, they began, in 1929, to make gramophone records of their comic songs.

All that was to change when in September of 1930 they decided to make a talking record. It was to fill up the B side of Parlophone R789; it was called *"Wedding Bells"* and featured a couple of cockney woman watching a high society wedding. Gert and Daisy were born.

Elsie and Doris Waters continued to make many recordings, first for Parlophone, then Columbia and finally for Decca: the last title listed in Brian Rust's *"British Music Hall on Record"* is a morale-boosting *"Won't we 'ave a party when it's over"* and *"Brother Jack -- a message from Mum"* on Decca F7503 in April 1940.

The pair continued to appear on radio for many years and although their Gert and Daisy act did not transfer too happily to television, they continued working on the stage and it seems their final appearance was only a few months before the death of Doris in August 1978. The sisters lived together near Brighton for more than thirty years and until relatively recently Elsie Waters was still to be seen travelling by train to London to renew old acquaintances.

Colin Johnson

## Dame Eva Turner

1892 – 1990

Dame Eva Turner, one of the most distinguished sopranos of her generation, died in a London hospital on June 16th, at the age of 98.

She achieved international operatic fame between the wars. She was born in Oldham, Lancashire, but was brought up in Bristol, where she studied with Daniel Rootham, who had taught Clara Butt. She studied at the Royal Academy of Music from 1911 to 1915 and in 1916 made her debut as a member of the chorus of the Carl Rosa Company; her solo debut came a little later as a page in Tannhauser. It was in the 1920s that she attracted the attention of Toscanini, who is reported to have said; *"Bella voce, bella pronuncia – e bella figura."* She was engaged to sing at La Scala and soon became a favourite in Italy. The role with which is particularly associated is that of Turandot, a part she first sang in Brescia in 1926, only two years after Puccini's death.



She maintained a busy career throughout the 1930s and during the war years gave many concerts for the troops before returning to Covent Garden for her final Turandot in the 1947-48 concert season.

After retiring at the age of fifty-six, she took up teaching, first at the university of Oklahoma; she was invited to stay for a year and ended up staying for eight. One of her favourite stories, told in her rich Lancashire accent which she spiced up with superb Italianate rolling 'R's was of a local Oklahoma newspaper's announcement that she was coming to the University as a Professor of Vice - "That's why I was such a success and stayed so long!" From 1959 to 1966 she was a Professor at the Royal Academy of Music. Until recently she was teaching privately.

Walter Legge, who heard all the great voices of the inter-war years at Covent Garden, used to say that when he was asked whose voice was the most powerful he would of course acknowledge Flagstad, but then: "If you want to know who it was that sent the voice right up to the back of the gallery, bored a hole through the wall and then sailed out into Bow Street, it was Eva Turner." Ernest Newman noted, in the late 1920s: "We had the impression that the scoring that could drown Miss Turner has not yet been put on paper."

The fulsome obituaries of Eva Turner noted her small recorded output, and in fact the Oakwood Press *"Voices of the Past"* Columbia cata-

-logue lists a mere fifteen double-sided discs, a small legacy indeed for a career that spanned more than thirty years. However a number of records were made of Eva Turner which were never issued at the time. For example, in the 1937 Coronation season at Covent Garden she was recorded with Martinelli, those discs winally appearing in the late 1980s. Additionally, over the past year or so there have been some releases of other previously unissued material to add to that which is already available. She must have been one of the last major operatic stars surviving who *could* have recorded acoustically - in fact it appears that her recording career did not begin until some time in 1926 or '27.

There re those who object that too much is made of her accomplishments. They point out that her appearances at La Scala were limited to two roles, in one season only, that while she auditioned for Toscanini he did not conduct the performances, and so forth. What is clear however is that her return to this country from Italy in 1928 was not simply a triumph of the season but of the whole period. Nor was there any question of the 'local girl makes good' type of bias - the prejudice against English singers in those years would have ensured pointedly unbiased critical judgement.

The fact that the critics were in fact so unstinting in their praise throughout her career leaves no doubt that all her praise was richly deserved, and her position in history secure.

Colin Johnson



## Nominations for the AGM

**Please note that notification of any nominations for positions on the committee, officers of the Society etc. for the AGM should be sent to our new secretary, Suzanne Lewis, Buckinghamshire, SL3 0JY, to arrive not later than August 31st.**

(For details of the time and place at which the AGM is to be held

please see the advertisement elsewhere in this issue)



## An Incidental Music Note

February and March are considered to be the months of the amateur theatre in the towns and villages of Ireland. Festivals of Drama are held at several venues in my area. For a few pounds one can buy a patron's ticket and enjoy several nights of live entertainment. On a number of occasions I have supplied a gramophone or phonograph as a "prop" but a teaching colleague of mine, in his role as producer of "Juno and the Paycock" for a local group had a better idea – he wanted proper period music. He enlisted my help by presenting me with a list of titles he wished me to play before the show began and during the interval.

"Juno and the Paycock", set in the living room of a tenement house in Dublin in 1922, was written by Sean O'Casey. Born on 30th March 1889, he was the last of thirteen children, eight of whom died in infancy. He was a sickly child who suffered from chronic eye disease which made any formal education impossible. So he taught himself to read and at the time of his death in Tortuay on 18th September 1964 had written seventeen plays and six volumes of autobiography amongst other things. So, onto magnetic tape we committed the following for the enjoyment of patrons awaiting the start of the play: a lively start was promised by the Flanagan Brothers' "Jenny picking Cockles" – Gennett 5206, followed by "At the Dawning of the Morning" by The McNulty Family, American recorded but Irish pressed Decca W. These Irish Deccas have a green label and were big sellers in their day. John McGittigan's "Rare Old Irish Whiskey" on Regal Zonophone MR 1614 was followed by another John – McCormack this time, whose HMV DA 307 of "Ben Bolt" sounded as fresh and bright as when it was recorded in April 1914. McCormack sang again, this time in the duet from "The Barber of Seville", with Sammarco, on HMV 2-2054021. Staying with HMV, "Santa Lucia" on DA 903 was sung by Emilio de Gorgoza, the Spanish-American baritone. The Victor catalogue said of him: "There is Anglo-Saxon strength and virility, Spanish passion and abandon, Italian subtlety and latent fire, French nicety of detail in all his work." But if you search through the very early Victor lists you will find some popular songs by De Gorgoza under the pseudonym Herbert Goddard, Signor Francisco and so forth.

Then, to get a Dublin atmosphere about the place we included "Biddy Mulligan," recorded by

Jimmy O'Dea on Parlophone E 3817. A well recorded piece this, in contrast with the poor sound of many of the O'Dea Parlophones of the late 1920s and 30s. I wonder if O'Casey had crossed paths with an earlier Dublin comedian, Joe Cheevers of whom I have one International Zonophone – his famous "Sneezing Song." The lights dimmed and, to the fading strains of Kreisler's "Minuet," on Da 777, the curtain rose. During the second act the "Paycock" of the title – a nickname for Jack Boyle, the play's male lead, breaks into "When the Robins nest again;" for the interval I included the only version of it I have, by counter-tenor Will Oakland on Columbia 2161 issued in July 1913 from US Columbia A 1183. Also during the second act a gramophone is carried on stage – my Zonophone hornless model filled the part perfectly! It still has underneath a label stating: "Tested 6th Jan 1920," just right for the period – although no music is played at this point in the play. During the 15 minute interval between Acts Two and Three, we played "Home to our Mountains" from "Il Trovatore", which is also sung by the cast during Act Two. I had just one copy, an early Columbia-Rena 239 by John Young and Marie Jilstson. Then John McCormack's "Rose of Tralee"; Delia Murphy and Richard Hayward's "What will you do love" from HMV IM 576; Fiddler Michael Coleman's 'Hornpipe' selections on Vocalion. I had a choice of several discs of "Kathleen Malvourneen" and settled for Victor A 644 by William J. Hooley, recorded all of 86 years ago.

Returning to Act Three of the play, glasses are clinked and the gramophone is cranked and supposedly set into motion – to the sound of "Jack's the Lad", Zonophone 116 of James Braw the champion melodeon player. Correct sound too – unlike the Phonograph (Columbia, I think) used in the film "North to Alaska" when on board ship John Wayne and his fellow players listen to what sounds like a stereo cylinder! Returning to the end of our play, poverty overtakes Jack Boyle's family and after removal men have reclaimed the furniture and clothing on which money is owed, the gramophone dealer is beaten to his machine by an irate neighbour who grabs it in lieu of borrowed cash!

And so we depart the Athenaeum, Enniscorthy, having enjoyed a night out provided once again by the record collection.

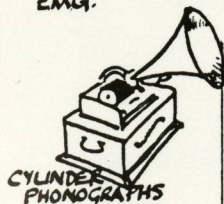
*Michael Hegarty*

(Editor's note: At a drama festival shortly afterwards "Juno" won the top award – and Michael Hegarty's music was given a special commendation).





EMG.



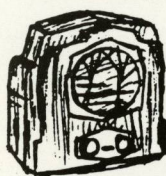
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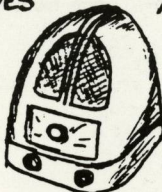
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